



A Q88 customer case study of Tsakos Columbia Shipmanagement

Simplifying vetting and supporting long-term client relationships for Tsakos Columbia Shipmanagement

Committed to delivering first class ship management services

Tsakos Columbia Shipmanagement (TCM) S.A. is part of the Tsakos Group of complementary maritime business subsidiaries. Established in 2010 with principal offices in Athens, the organization combines the considerable management and operational expertise and professional skills in of the two groups, both in ship management and client service.

TCM provides technical management, along with operational and crewing services to a diversified fleet of approximately 90 vessels consisting of tankers (including shuttle and LNG gas carriers), as well as to container and dry cargo ships with an aggregate capacity of about 10 million deadweight tons. TCM builds

upon its founders' reputation while striving to provide the highest quality services to owners of ships trading all over the world. Committed to delivering first class ship management services, with zero incidents, zero losses and minimum environmental impact, TCM continually reviews the performance of its fleet and takes bold initiatives to ensure its steady improvement with a view to fully satisfy its customers' expectations. Towards such an end, it recently established the Maria Tsakos TCM Academy, a training center, which comprises a state-of-the-art type A (highest) Kongsberg Bridge Simulator together with Engine Room and cargo handling simulators and other training facilities.

Vetting at scale to support key long-term client relationships

The company considers vetting performance one of the main indicators of the effective implementation of the onboard safety management system and is pivotal in managing company's safety and environmental performance.

With a fleet of 95 or so vessels to look after, the vetting department is an exceptionally busy operational hub. Anastasios Kartsimadakis, Vetting & Inspections Manager, says: "The majority of the fleet is made up of 67 tankers. We need to operate efficiently to support our long-term clients in the oil industry."

Three key parts of this mission are managing all aspects of questionnaires, vetting and crew certification in line with best practice and compliance. To ensure this is carried out to the required standards, Tsakos Columbia has been using Q88.com for ship management since the system launched in 2008.

"We upload all vetting related reports as well as preparing questionnaires for charterers and other third-parties. To facilitate management of crew certification we upgraded our subscription to let us access the Officer Matrix compliance manager functionality," says Anastasios Kartsimadakis.

He continues: "The large scale of our operations makes data and analysis very important. Deep analysis of vetting performance with leading indicators, auditing and benchmarking all help us to understand where we are and identify any potential improvements."

A thorough SIRE performance analysis is conducted based on qualitative indicators. Necessary corrective and/or improvement actions are taken for areas where weakness is identified. The results of the above process are examined during the management review committee meetings and are used for continual improvement.

Supports accuracy, speed and commercial efficiency

Q88.com is the most comprehensive database of its type, allowing the upload and maintenance of all the required data to support the compliance of tanker operations. With approximately 1200 questionnaire templates available, vessel information is quickly scraped from the database, automating completion of questionnaires in minutes.

Widely trusted across the tanker shipping sector, Q88.com is available in 4 levels of subscription to meet the vetting needs of any company with a commercial interest in tanker operations. The highest subscription level, Ship Owner, provides access to the Officer Matrix feature.

This meets all the requirements set out by the Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF). Officer Matrix also has offline support, allowing vessels to maintain crew certification onboard without the need for internet connectivity, with support for email and automatic import into the system.

Whether for chartering or port and oil terminal vetting, a host of supporting features support accuracy, speed and commercial efficiency when using the information. Across the Q88 suite of cloud software and data services, system users enjoy 24/7 access on mobile devices, anywhere, anytime they choose to work connected to the internet.

Unique with benefits felt in a number of ways

Anastasios Kartsimadakis says, "The main benefits of Q88 are felt in a number of ways. Firstly, speed of data and analysis; it is immediate with no delay. Secondly, it is a reliable and stable platform, we see no bugs. Thirdly, the integration of all the other functions with Officer Matrix seems to be unique."

He continues: "Overall, the correlation of data across certificate management, questionnaires and matrix data in a single platform is very good, because exporting it as a single data set makes analysis much easier. We're dealing with perhaps 20 screenings a day which always contain questionnaire and matrix elements."

"In general, for a company with our level of exposure, important relationships with oil majors and the number of screenings and vetting requests we see on a daily basis, it would simply be impossible for a company of our size to operate without Q88. There isn't any alternative that integrates the database to support vetting and the questionnaire functionality," says Anastasios Kartsimadakis.

He continues: "To help us with some parts of vetting analysis not supported by Q88 we use another 3rd party application, because no single application currently offers exactly what we need. However, future development of the platform looks very promising for us. Through Q88's Athens-based Client Services Director we have been able to speak to the application development manager in the US. We hope to see new features that will eventually allow us to only need the Q88 platform for vetting purposes."

Fritz Heidenreich, President of Q88 LLC says, "There is tremendous synergy in the maritime tradition and heritage shared by our companies. It has been the basis for the parallel evolution of our businesses, and this is set to continue. Collaborating with our US development team towards the goal of centralizing all vetting on Q88 should eliminate the expense of additional software for TCM. Ultimately, this means we'll deliver better value to all our customers."

Need further information?

Should you require more information, don't hesitate, please contact us.

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About Q88 LLC

Q88 LLC is the platform used by shipping professionals to conduct business. Founded in 2001, Q88 LLC is the leading SaaS technology provider to the maritime industry. Q88's mission is to make the global shipping industry more open and connected. People use Q88 products to share information and work collaboratively, to access disparate information, and to turn static data into powerful insights. We believe that with the right technology guiding the right people, the possibilities are endless.